

OBITUARY

L. GLAUERT, M.B.E.

Ludwig Glauert, Director Emeritus of the Western Australian Museum, a foundation member and Patron of the Western Australian Naturalists' Club, died at the Repatriation General Hospital, Hollywood, W.A., on February 1, 1963. He was in his 84th year.

An extended notice of Mr. Glauert's career appeared in volume 5 of this journal, no. 7 of which, issued on March 8, 1957, was published as a valedictory number in his honour; on the occasion of his retirement from the directorship of the Western Australian Museum. The present account, therefore, will not duplicate the information given in that number but will be confined to supplementary details and items overlooked in the earlier article.



L. Glauert, left, 1919; right, 1935.

In summary Mr. Glauert's career was as follows: He was born in Sheffield, England, on May 5, 1879, and after training as a geologist came to Western Australia in 1908. After a period with the Geological Survey of Western Australia he was appointed to the staff of the Western Australian Museum in 1910. On his return from World War I in 1920 he became head of the Museum as Keeper of the Biological Collections; this title was altered to Curator in 1927 and to Director in 1954. He was an active member of Perth scientific societies, becoming president of the Royal Society of Western Australia and of the Western Australian Naturalists' Club, receiving the gold medal of the former and honorary membership of the latter. He was well known to the public as radio broadcaster and public speaker and was constantly interviewed by the press on natural history matters. To young naturalists and University students he was a refreshing and stimulating guide and mentor. Undoubtedly for about 40 years he can be claimed to have

been the leading force in guiding and stimulating natural history in this State and no person in the natural history field was better known.

Mr. Glauert always held the Naturalists' Club in warm regard and, although unable to attend very many meetings in his later years, always retained an interest in its work. Both in education and in conservation he felt the Club was doing pioneering work comparable to any being carried out in other parts of Australia. Probably nothing gave him greater pleasure in the last few years than the Club's publication of his two handbooks, one on the snakes and the other on the lizards. He had always emphasised the difficulties local naturalists laboured under in the past owing to the lack of suitable field identification books and of a journal like the *W.A. Naturalist* in which they could record the results of their original work.

Mr. Glauert's most notable personal researches in the earlier years were on the fossil vertebrates in the South-West caves and his investigations were then transferred, after World War I, to various groups of living animals, including crustacea, scorpions, amphibia, reptiles and mammals. He was a leader in the conservation field. Despite heartbreaking restrictions of finance and personnel he carried on active research; his publication record extended over a period of 58 years and continued to his death. In fact he never retired from research.

When he was able to retire from active Museum duties, on the arrival of the new Director, Dr. W. D. L. Ride, in July 1957, he continued work at the Museum on reptiles. The Museum trustees conferred on him the title of Director Emeritus and provided him with a study room and facilities for continuing his investigations. In spite of increasing frailty his routine was to arrive at the Museum at 9 o'clock each morning and work until 11 o'clock. Then he would return by tram (and later by bus, when trams ceased operating) to his hotel, first the King Edward Hotel in the city and later the George, further west. He continued so until a few days before his death. A few weeks before he died he demonstrated to me under the microscope certain features in the morphology of a scorpion species on which he was working, with frequent references to texts in German and Latin, to clarify a point he was making in a paper for the *Naturalist*.

In 1962, having completed his revisions of the local reptiles, he transferred his attentions to this earlier interest, the scorpions. His intention was to revise the local species and prepare a handbook on them. A first paper appeared in 1962 and he completed an annotated checklist and keys on the species of two of the three local families of scorpions when he had to enter hospital towards the end of January for the treatment of a minor eye infection. Whilst in hospital he died suddenly from a heart attack. To the end he remained mentally alert and though his friends noted an increasing weariness in him at times and a despondency which was formerly quite foreign to his nature, the familiar mood of the old fervour remained predominant. A few days before his death he asked me to come to the